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09/649,484	08/28/2000	Eliot R. Long	10566/4	8431

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EXAMINER

SOTOMAYOR, JOHN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3714

DATE MAILED: 11/04/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/649,484

Applicant(s)

LONG, ELIOT R.

Examiner

John L Sotomayor

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 August 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8-16 and 18-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7 and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 August 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. In response to the amendment filed August 13, 2003, claims 1-20 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant sets forth in the preamble that the claim is directed toward a method of evaluating group-administered test results, however, the claim does not present an evaluation step causing confusion about the claim and rendering the claim indefinite.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant sets forth in the preamble that the claim is directed toward a method of evaluating group-administered test results, however, although the claim sets forth the step of identifying class profiles the claim does not present a method step for evaluation of class profiles that have been identified causing confusion about the claim and rendering the claim indefinite.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claim recites a step of providing profiles of individuals whose test item

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responses are exposed "to a common external influence". Although the specification refers to the test administrator as the most likely common external influence, the exposure of test takers to a "common external influence" causes confusion about the scope of the claim and renders the claim indefinite.

Claims 3-10 and 12-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as they inherit the deficiencies of the parent claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

a. A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
 4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
4. Claims 1-6, and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elliott et al (US 6,431,875 B1) in view of Stuppy (US 6,146,148).

Regarding claims 1,2 and 11, Elliot et al discloses a testing method in which test results are evaluated on a question-by-question basis against a normal test result from students who are

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known to have not cheated to identify those students who vary from the norm (Col 18, lines 23-48). Elliot et al also discloses using statistical methods for the analysis of test takers against the normal profile of test takers known not to have cheated for whole groups of individuals taking the test (Col 18, lines 15-23). Elliot et al does not specifically disclose that all members of the class included in a normative profile are subject to the direction of a test administrator on a selected test. However, Stuppy teaches developing student profiles on a battery of tests that are subject to the direction of a computer administrator, that tests are scored and norm comparisons are made, and that student results are tracked and managed by the computer administrator (Col 10, lines 41-53). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide profiles for individuals and groups indicative of performance on the test on a question-by-question basis as disclosed by Elliot et al and that the test takers are subject to a single administrator and scores are compiled and compared against a known test norm and tracked and managed by the computer administrator as taught by Stuppy for the purposes of selecting exceptional or undesirable performance on a set of tests by a group of test takers.

Regarding claims 3,4, and 6, Elliot et al discloses a plurality of statistical methods for analyzing test results against a norm to determine if a test taker has cheated, including reporting the number of decoy questions answered correctly while a low test result is achieved, and the time spent on each question, among others (Col 18, lines 15-35). Elliot et al does not specifically disclose the statistical methods of low correlation with the norm (claim 3) or the number of portions of the student profile that differ from the norm (claims 4 and 6). However, low correlation against a norm is a common and well-used statistical measure and all statistical measures are commonly used against an entire profile to provide a thorough analysis of results

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for test assessment. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to derive the statistical methods of low correlation with the norm, or the number of portions of the student profile that differ from the norm.

Regarding claim 5, Elliot et al discloses comparing the difference between an accumulated test taker profile and a norm profile on a question-by-question basis and provides a measure of expected variability of performance both on the test and for future endeavors (Col 18, lines 36-48).

Regarding claim 12, Elliot et al discloses a test deliverer that delivers the same test to a group of test takers to permit normalization of test scores with greater accuracy (Col 17, lines 7-12).

Regarding claims 13,14 and 16, Elliot et al discloses a plurality of statistical methods for analyzing test results against a norm to determine if a test taker has cheated, including reporting the number of decoy questions answered correctly while a low test result is achieved, and the time spent on each question, among others (Col 18, lines 15-35). Elliot et al does not specifically disclose the statistical methods of low correlation with the norm (claim 13) or the number of portions of the student profile that differ from the norm (claims 14 and 16). However, low correlation against a norm is a common and well-used statistical measure and all statistical measures are commonly used against an entire profile to provide a thorough analysis of results for test assessment. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to derive the statistical methods of low correlation with the norm, or the number of portions of the student profile that differ from the norm.

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Regarding claim 15, Elliot et al discloses comparing the difference between an accumulated test taker profile and a norm profile on a question-by-question basis and provides a measure of expected variability of performance both on the test and for future endeavors (Col 18, lines 36-48).

5. Claims 8 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elliott et al in view of Stuppy in further view of Mishkin (US 6,377,781 B1).

Regarding claims 8 and 18, Elliot et al does not specifically disclose nor does Stuppy teach determining a class profile from individual profiles. However, Mishkin teaches that individual profiles may be accumulated into larger units as defined by sessions for entire classes and groups of classes, including any sub-grouping desired based upon the number of sessions, taking the same quiz (Col 4, lines 50-60). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide profiles for individuals and groups indicative of performance on the test on a question-by-question basis as disclosed by Elliot et al and to provide a method for accumulating a class profile from all of the individual profiles in a given class as taught by Mishkin for the purposes of extending statistical analysis for abnormal behavior across an entire grouping of individuals who take a common test.

6. Claims 9,10,19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elliott et al in view of Stuppy in further view of Siefert (6,386,883 B2).

Regarding claims 9 and 19, Elliot et al does not specifically disclose nor does Stuppy teach that the profiles for a class (claim 9) or a sub-group (claim 19) are indicative of expected performance for a particular skill level. However, Siefert teaches a computer assisted education method in which skills required for a student's advancement are basic data required in student

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profiles (Col 8, lines 55-65). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide profiles for individuals and groups indicative of performance on the test on a question-by-question basis as disclosed by Elliot et al and to view a class or sub-group profile for an indication of expected performance characterized by skill level as taught by Siefert for the purposes of providing an assessment for educators for the expected advancement of a class given the current skill level of the profiles within the class.

Regarding claims 10 and 20, Elliot et al does not specifically disclose nor does Stuppy teach that the profiles for a class (claim 10) or a sub-group (claim 20) are indicative of expected performance for a wide-range of skill levels. However, Siefert teaches a computer assisted education method in which the plurality of skills required for a student's advancement are basic data required in student profiles (Col 8, lines 55-65). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide profiles for individuals and groups indicative of performance on the test on a question-by-question basis as disclosed by Elliot et al and to view a class or sub-group profile for an indication of expected performance characterized by a plurality of skill levels as taught by Siefert for the purposes of providing an assessment for educators for the expected performance of a plurality of skill levels.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 7 and 17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior art does not teach or suggest comparing the frequency of

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successive equal measures of class success in answering the questions on a question-by-question basis as shown in the claims.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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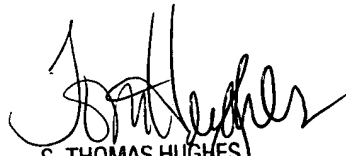
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John L Sotomayor whose telephone number is 703-305-4558.

The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-4:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Hughes can be reached on 703-308-1806. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-4558.

jls
October 29, 2003


S. THOMAS HUGHES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700